

Introduction to the Book “From the Mouth of a Sage”

It is known from books and from authors that the study of the wisdom of Kabbalah is an absolute must for any person from Israel. If one studies the entire Torah and knows the Mishnah and the Gemara by heart; if one is also filled with virtues and good deeds more than all his contemporaries, but has not learned the wisdom of Kabbalah, he must incarnate once more into this world to study the secrets of Torah and wisdom of truth. This is brought in several places in the writing of our sages.

This is what the Zohar writes in the interpretation to the “Song of Songs”, explaining the verse, “If thou know not, O thou fairest among women,” which our sages interpreted as the soul that comes before the Throne after one’s demise.

The Creator tells it: “If thou know not, O thou fairest among women.” Although you are the fairest among women and virtuous in good deeds more than all the souls, if you do not have knowledge in the secrets of Torah, “go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock,” leave here and never return to this world. “And feed thy kids, beside the shepherds’ tents,” go there to the seminaries and learn the secrets of Torah from the mouths of the disciples of our sages.

We must understand their words conditioning the perfection of a person with the study of the wisdom of truth. Seemingly, how is it different from the other words of the revealed Torah? We found nowhere that one is obligated to understand all the subjects of the Torah and that he will not be completed if one subject in the Torah is missing. Moreover, our sages said that it is not the study that is the most important, but the act. Our sages also said, “One does much, the other little, as long as they aim their hearts to Heaven,” and there are many such sayings.

In order to attain the depth of their above words we must first thoroughly understand what has been written many times in the Zohar and the *Tikkunim* (Corrections of the Zohar) with good taste and with reason: “The Torah, the Creator, and Israel, are one.” This seems very perplexing.

Before I elucidate their words I will notify you that our sages have defined a great rule for us regarding all the holy names and appellations in the books. These are their golden words: “Anything that we do not attain, we do not define by a name.”

Interpretation: It is known that there is no thought and perception in Him whatsoever, as it is written in the article “Elijah Started” in the beginning of the *Tikkunim* of the Zohar. For that reason, even the thought of the “Self” of the Creator is forbidden, much less the speech.

All the names we call Him do not refer to His Self, only to His Lights, expanding from Him to the lower ones. Even the holy name *Ein Sof* (Infinity), presented in the Kabbalah books is also regarded as Light that expands from His Essence.

However, since He determined that His Light, which expands from His Self will be attained by the lower ones as *Ein Sof*, we shall therefore define it by that name. Yet, this does not refer to His Essence. Since there is absolutely no perception or thought in Him, how shall we define Him by a name and a word? After all, all that we do not attain, we do not define by a name.

Any novice in the enlightenment in the wisdom of truth must contemplate the above great rule before any scrutiny in the wisdom of Kabbalah, that even the thought is forbidden in His Self since there is no perception in Him whatsoever. Yet, how does it speak of a "name" and "attainment", which indicate attainment?

However, it is a great *Mitzva* to examine and research in His illuminations that expand from Him, which are all the holy names and appellations brought in the books. It is an utter must for any person from Israel to study and understand the secrets of Torah and all the ways of His bestowal upon the lower ones, which are the gist of the wisdom of truth and the future reward of the souls at the end of correction.

It is written in the words of our sages, the Zohar and the *Tikkunim* that all the Upper Worlds and all the Holy *Sefirot* of the five worlds *AK* and *ABYA* have been prepared ahead of time in quantity and quality to complement the children of Israel. This is so because the soul of one from Israel is a part of God above and "An act ends in the preliminary thought."

It arose in His Simple Will to delight the souls by way of reward for their labor and for that reason the entire reality expanded from before Him by way of a sequence of causes and their consequences in the descent of the degrees through the worlds *AK* and *ABYA*. Finally, they elicited two discernments clothed in one another, meaning the soul from the concealments of heaven that expands and robes the corporeal body.

The essence of reality expanded through the last degree, which is the corporeal body with a soul. Similarly, the concatenation was made by way of cause and consequence relating to the essence of the existence of reality, which are the conducts of His administering that hang down by gradations.

Thus, the Upper Light is Higher than High and will ultimately expand and come to the soul clothed in the corporeal body in this world, as it is written, "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying: 'Know the Lord'; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."

It is written by our sages and in the book of Zohar, "The whole Torah is the names of the Creator." All the stories and the laws and the sentences, all are the Holy Names of the Creator.

According to the above that "Anything that we do not attain we do not define by a name," you will thoroughly understand the meaning of the Holy Names of the Creator. These are the attainments that expand from Him to His servants, the prophets and the righteous, each according to his merit, as it is written, "we are distinguished, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

This distinguishing comes to us through the reception of the Torah and the keeping of *Mitzvot*, first only in the revealed way. It has the merit of purifying our bodies and enhancing our souls to such a measure that we become worthy of attaining the entire Torah and its *Mitzvot* as His Names. This is the entire reward intended for the souls at the end of correction. However, it is in this world too, as it is written in the Gmarah, "You shall see your world in your life."

That explains to us why he calls the 613 *Mitzvot* 613 counsels in several places in the Zohar and in many other places in the Zohar he calls the 613 *Mitzvot* 613 commandments. This is so because at first one must keep the Torah and the *Mitzvot* in order to purify his body and enhance his soul. At that time the 613 *Mitzvot* are as 613

counsels for him, meaning "tips" by which to purify one bit by bit until one is awarded the Light of the countenance of the King of life.

Also, it is written similarly in the Gmarah: "Why should the Creator mind if one slaughters at the throat or at the back of the neck? Indeed, the Torah and *Mitzvot* were given only in order to purify Israel."

However, after one has been sufficiently purified and merits the Light of the King's countenance, one's eyes and soul open and he is awarded the attaining the 613 Sacred Lights found in the 613 *Mitzvot*. These are His Holy Names, meaning the ones that come to our attainment.

By keeping each of the *Mitzvot* one takes the part of the Light deposited in that *Mitzva* since the *Mitzva* is a *Kli* (vessel) where the Light is clothed. This is so because the *Mitzva* is a *Kli* and the Light is clothed in it, meaning a Holy Name that belongs explicitly to that *Mitzva*. This is the meaning of "The *Mitzva* is a candle and the Torah is the Light."

At that time he calls the 613 *Mitzvot* 613 commandments. It is like one who deposits good stones and gems in a vessel and says to his loved one: "Take this *Kli* for yourself but guard it from the thieves and the robbers." Thus, they only speak of the vessel, but their primary intention is the precious stones deposited there.

It is known in the books of Kabbalah that the meaning of the Holy Name "The Blessed Holy One" or *Kudsha Brich Hu* (the same name in Aramaic) written by our sages and in the Zohar, is named after the *HaVaYaH* (*Yod-Hey-Vav-Hey*). This Holy Name contains all the Holy Names until one Higher than High. Thus, we learn that "The Torah and the Creator are one," even though the masses do not see Him in the Torah, but only stories, sentences and laws.

Indeed, I have already explained that "apples of gold in settings of silver" is how the 613 commandments are called. As our sages said, "The whole Torah is the names of the Creator." Hence, the Torah and the Creator are one.

Yet, there are general and particular, where the Creator is the assembly of all the names and the general Light, and the Torah is divided into 613 Lights. It follows, that all of them together are one, and are the Creator Himself.

Now there still remains for us to explain the discernment of Israel. First, you must understand that matter of the multiplicity of the separate forms in spirituality, meaning how they are divided and in what. Corporeal things are separated by a knife and such, or time and place separates and distinguishes them. Yet, this is unthinkable in spirituality as it is known to be beyond time and space.

However, know that the whole difference in spirituality between the Upper Lights is only in the disparity of form. For example: the mental souls in people are certainly divided into separate souls. Each individual has a different soul.

Yet, the essential difference between them is nothing more then stemming out of their disparity in form. For example: the soul of one is good, the other's is bad, one has acquired wisdom, and the other folly etc. Our sages say about that, "As their faces are different, so are their views."

Yet, we can understand that if all people were to come by equal concepts and inclinations without any difference whatsoever, all the souls of all the people would be regarded as a single soul. Its value would have been the same as the sunlight; the light

clothes in all the inhabitants of the world, yet we do not discern that there are separate forms in the sunlight. Similarly, one mental soul would have robed in many bodies since places do not separate at all in spiritual matters if there are no separate forms in their attribute.

Now we shall come to the actual scrutiny: It is known that the meaning of the souls of the children of Israel is that they are a part of God above. The soul cascaded by way of cause and consequence and descended degree-by-degree until it was suitable to come into this world and clothe the filthy corporeal body.

It ascends degree-by-degree until its stature is completed by keeping the Torah and observing its *Mitzvot*. Finally, it is worthy of receiving its reward from The Whole, which has been prepared for it in advance, meaning attaining the holy Torah, namely the Names of the Creator, which are the 613 commandments.

Now you can see with your own eyes that "The Torah and Israel are one." The whole difference between the Torah and the soul is due to the disparity of form in the soul, which has been reduced to a very very small Light, and the Torah is Simple Light that expands from His Essence, whose sublimity is endless. It has been written "The Torah and the Creator are one."

However, when the soul is complete in its full stature and receives the Torah in the form of His Names, namely attains all the Light deposited in the Torah and *Mitzvot*, you find that the Light of the soul is equal to the Light of the Torah in any case. This is because it has already attained the entire Light deposited in the Torah.

It is considered incomplete as long as there is some deficit in attaining a small and subtle part of the general Light of the Torah. This is because the entire Light was prepared for the souls, as I have explained above, "Everything that we do not attain, we do not define by name."

Since the Light has been prepared for the attainment of the soul, and the soul did not attain all of it, it is therefore deemed incomplete. It is as it is written, "I shall keep the whole Torah except one thing, certainly he is a complete evil."

However, such as that you can declare in the keeping of the Torah and *Mitzvot* in attaining the 613 commandments. It is incomplete when lacking even one thing, great or small.

Hence, it will finally come to complete perfection, namely attain the entire Light of the Torah. At that time there will be no disparity of form between the Light of the soul and the Light of Torah anyhow. Thus, you find with a good flavor that "The Torah and Israel are one," literally.

They are one because there really is no difference and disparity of form between them. Since we have already proven that "The Creator and the Torah are one," and now we have proven that "The Torah and Israel are one," it is therefore evident that "The Torah and the Creator and Israel are one."

From all the above you find that there are two parts in the Torah and *Mitzvot*:

- A. This is the Torah and *Mitzvot* as they appear to all, being the keeping of *Mitzvot* and the study of Torah in the form of 613 counsels. These have the merit of purifying and cleansing the body, enhancing the virtue of the soul to be worthy and merit receiving the Light of life in the King's

countenance as was the soul in its root before it lessened and came to this base body in the base world.

- B. Keeping the *Mitzvot* and studying the Torah in the form of 613 deposits, namely the matter of attaining His Names and the full reward of the souls.

The merit of the latter part over the former is as the merit of Heaven over Earth. This is because the first part is a mere preparation and the second part is the actual completeness and the purpose of creation.

This explains our above question about the words of our sages, that even if a person excels in the Torah and good deeds more than all his contemporaries, if he has not learned the secrets of Torah and the wisdom of truth, he must reincarnate in the world.

We asked: What is difference between this subject in the wisdom of truth from other subjects in the Torah? We found nowhere that one is compelled to engage in all the topics in the Torah. On the contrary, we have found opposition to that in many places, such as, "One does much, the other little, as long as they aim their hearts to Heaven," and also, "It is not the study that is of importance, but the act."

Now it becomes utterly clear: the entire part of the revealed Torah is but a preparation to become worthy and merit attaining the concealed part. It is the concealed part that is the very wholeness and the purpose for which one is created.

Hence, clearly, if a part of the concealed part is missing, though one may keep the Torah and observe its commandments in the revealed part, he will still have to come to this world again and receive what he should receive, namely the concealed part in the form of the 613 deposits. Only in that is the soul completed in the way the Creator had predetermined for it.

You can therefore see the utter necessity for anyone from Israel, whomever he may be to engage in the internality of the Torah and in its secrets. Without it, the intention of creation will not be completed in man.

This is the reason that we reincarnate, generation-by-generation through our contemporary generation, which is the residue of the souls upon which the intention of creation has not been completed, as they did not attain the secrets of the Torah in the past generations.

For that reason they have said in the Zohar: "The secrets of Torah and its mysteries are destined to be revealed in the time of the Messiah." It is clear to anyone who understands since they will be completing the intention of creation, and therefore merit the coming of the Messiah. Hence, inevitably, the secrets of the Torah will be revealed among them openly since if the correction is prevented they will be compelled to reincarnate.

This will explain to you what we should ask about this interpretation in general, for who am I and who are my fathers that I have been awarded making the interpretation to expand the knowledge of the hidden secrets in the Zohar and the writings of the Ari? Moreover, why have we thus far found no other to interpret this wisdom as openly as I?

Now you can see that because our generation is really the time of the Messiah and we are all standing at the threshold of the complete correction, that the only prevention is the departure of the wisdom of truth from this generation to the very ends of it. This is so because of the difficulty of the tongues and the scattered matters.

In addition to all that, there is the smallness of the mind and the many troubles abundant in our generation. Hence, when the Lord wishes to hasten the redemption of our souls, He has passed a privilege on to my hand to disclose the measure in this interpretation, and the will of God succeeded in my hand.

I did have another reason that brought me to interpret this disclosure, as it is written in the Zohar: "One must learn a little even from nonsense," as it is written, "as far as light excelleth darkness." After I completed my time in the city of Warsaw in the state of Poland, confined to my chamber and having nothing to do with the darkness of my surroundings, I have been blessed with settling in the Holy City of Jerusalem.

When I walked among the people I indeed saw the poverty of my people, the poverty of their mind. Their foolish laughter was in my ears as the crackling of thorns under a pot, mocking and trampling the heart and soul of our yearnings, uttering slander about the Lord and His Law and of His people in a loud voice, that there is no wisdom, understanding and knowledge in the wisdom of Kabbalah at all. Rather, it is an assortment of words and names, no sense and no moral, only literal words.

It is a privilege to chatter idle words in the written text with complete faith that they are holy things, and that thus the purpose of creation will be completed upon us. When those who engage in the literal texts with complete faith increase in number, the Messiah King will come at once, for by that the entire correction will be completed, and nothing more is needed.

Finally, I met with the famous among them. These are people that have already worn out their years delving in the writings of the Ari and the Zohar. They have so succeeded, that they have become proficient and conversant in all the writings of the Ari.

They have a reputation as being the holiest people in the land. I asked them if they had studied with a teacher who attained the internality of the matters. They answered: "Heavens, no! There is no internality here whatsoever but a literally written text, and not more than that, God forbid."

I asked them if Rav Chaim Vital had attained the internality of the matters? They replied: "He certainly did not attain more than we do." I then asked them about the Ari himself. They answered: "He certainly did not know about the interior more than we do in any way. All that he knew he'd passed on to his disciple Rav Chaim Vital and thus they came to our hands."

I mocked them: "How then were the matters composed in the heart of the Ari without any understanding and knowledge?" They replied: "He received the composition of these matters from Elijah, and he knew the internality since he is an angel." Here my wrath poured upon them, for my patience to be with them had ended.

When I saw that their folly had been rooted in nearly everyone who engaged in this wisdom at that time, woe to the ears that so hear, "Will he even force the queen before me in the house?"

The Holy Zohar has already mourned bitterly the denial of the sins in their souls, saying that there are no internal secrets in the Torah, as it is written in the Zohar, "Has the Torah come to show us fables and historic tales? Such stories and fables are found among other nations too." Our sages said that they uproot the plantings for they only take *Malchut*.

What would the authors of the Zohar say when seeing such a sinful culture of people, denying that there is any knowledge and wisdom in the words of the Zohar and the

wisdom of truth themselves? They say about the very secrets of the Torah that there is no knowledge and perception revealed in this world, but merely empty words. Thus, they have come to force the Holy Divinity inside the King's palace. Woe unto them, for they have caused their souls harm.

Our sages said that the Holy Torah mourns before the Creator: "Your sons have turned Me into a song in public-houses." They do not even make of the Torah a semblance of a song, only frightening words to any listener that arise contempt and wrath.

Furthermore, they wish to be rewarded like Phinehas, saying that they do it in complete faith. The writing says about them: "Forasmuch as this people draw near, and with their mouth and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me," and this is the reason for the ruin of the First Temple.

The devil still dances among us precisely at the time of the Messiah, the time of the end of the secrets of the Torah. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts came as a fire that will not quench in my bones. Because of that I have been awakened to disclose the clothe to such an extent that they would know that there is wisdom in Israel.

This has been among the primary reasons that made me come to this explanation. You must see in every purpose and every goal that it is utterly simple. All the wit, the cleverness and the many issues form during the preparation until the goal is reached. For example, when one wishes to sit in a house, he needs the wit and knowledge in the form of the design, the form of the inventions, the quality and the quantity of the rooms and the possessions.

The final goal is but a simple thing – to dwell there. This is the meaning of the words, "according to the beauty of a man, to dwell in the house." It is a simple thought, without any philosophizing and without wit, only a simple will.

Know, that all the sophistications in the knowledge are mostly mistakes that should fall before the truth. Yet, the truth itself is simple, without any wit.

There is a secret in that, principally being the iron wall that separates us from our Father in Heaven. There are things that are hidden because of their great height and depth, and there are things that are hidden because of their utter subtlety, like flies in the air, too thin to be seen.

Since His Light is a Simple Light such as that, the human mind, which does not feel a tiny portion of something, simply does not perceive. It is like the smaller things from the measure needed for an actual tool to see.

This is so because although not all of the depth of the height and the depth of the width are perceived, you can nonetheless perceive the proximate. However, with subtle things it seems as though they do not exist at all, since you do not attain even a slightest bit of them.